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ABSTRACT

Articles in these two issues of the newsletter on teaching adult literacy in English as a Second Language (ESL) address the following topics: (1) using time cards and paychecks in the classroom; (2) phonics and reading instruction; (3) dyslexia and ESL adult literacy; (4) a conference session on directions in adult literacy research; (5) literacy education research needs; (6) the language experience approach; (7) problems with the English alphabet; (8) teaching students how, when, and where to write their names; and (9) spatial dyslexia and literacy. Book and textbook reviews and professional announcements are also included. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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ESL ADULT LITERACY

Bulletin, November, 1987, VOL. 2: No. 1

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REVIEW

IN PRINT: **Beginning Literacy Through Cultural Awareness**. Lynellen D. Long and Janet Spiegel-Podnecky. Addison Wesley Publishing Co. Reading, MA, 1988.

This new classroom text is a very welcome addition to the thin ranks of ESL literacy materials. What IN PRINT has to offer that the other texts lack, is a multifaceted approach which acknowledges the variety of learning styles demonstrated by ESL learners and the necessity for instruction based on both meaning and decoding approaches.

The book also attempts some key socio-cultural issues, not only by presenting the opportunity to find out about North American society but also by giving learners the chance to discuss the patterns and norms of their traditional culture. Each chapter of the book attempts one theme, some of them ocvering such familiar orientation material as health, money and education, while others attempt less frequently covered areas such as changing roles, and discrimination.

Each chapter begins with a photograph to start discussion on the appropriate topic. This activity and the subsequent Talk section function in the same manner as a language experience approach to cover relevant vocabulary and raise expectations of the subject matter which will allow the learners to attempt the ensuing reading and writing tasks in context. The material is then put into an immedite pesonal context by Write and Read, a chart completion exercise where the learners copy the provided model but substitute their own personal information on topics such as child care practices in their own country. This means, of course, that writing precedes reading in each lesson, an interesting departure from the normal order of presentation but one which falls in well with the preferences of those adults who have even marginal literacy in their own language. Logistically, however, one wonders how the teacher manages when every class member is trying to write individualised answers to personal questions a problem which the othewise thorough Teacher's Guide does not really address.

Other basic activities in each chapter include, as indicated above, exercises on phonic skills, structural analysis skills and on sight word recognition. No surprises here, other than to find all three types of exercise in the same book. An interesting addition to these, however,

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is an activity where the learner has to demonstrate reading comprehension by first matching then explaining verbally the relationship between symbol and meaning. At its simplest this has the learner matching the written word to the appropriate illustrations. By the end of the book the learner is identifying the links between illustrations of various infringements of legal rights and the Acts which they are contravening. Each chapter also includes a Do section where the skills learned are applied to everyday tasks and a Write and Read Again section which pulls together the material covered and allows for learner generated language.

The activities are thus very well balanced, relevant and interestingly presented, making this one of the best all around ESL literacy texts on the market for the right audience. Influenced no doubt by the publisher's desire to sell to a wide audience the introduction suggests that the book can be used by almost any adult with a literacy problem in English, be it an immigrant with no previous exposure to literacy or a native speaker. Such claims are exaggerated, but the book is an excellent text for the second language learner who has some oral ability in English especially one who has at least minimal mother tongue literacy.

For those with no previous exposure to literacy, the pace would need to be slowed considerably with the activities provided serving as models from which further exercises could be devleoped Some of the illustrations are also likely to give trouble to preliterate learners , as they rely on such symbolic conventions as a rectangle with a flag to represnet a school while a similar rectangle with a cross represents a hospital. Illustration is always a thorny issue, caught as authors are between the advantages of being able to convey vital meaning without literacy demands and the limitations of what can be presented which is interculturally valid and financially feasible. This is why the photographs are particularly welcome in IN PRINT, and one wishes there were more of them.

IN PRINT is accompanied by a Teacher's Guide (which should be available by the end of the year) of which I was able to see only a partial prepublication draft. However, it appears to be an extremely detailed and thorough document which would allow even an inexperienced teacher to use the text comfortably. I was particularly pleased to see many recommendations for ways in which the text can be adapted to suit the different needs of students as well as suggestions and guidelines for the oral activities which are a critical part of ESL literacy.

IN PRINT is an extremely rich text, with each chapter providing material for 2-4 weeks of study. It acknowledges the experience and cognitive skills of its learners and allows the adults an opportunity to display those skills despite their limitations of language or literacy. It also recognizes the variety of uses to which learners may want to put their new literacy skills and provides opportunities for recording cultural background as well as interacting with the new society. This text is both theoretically sound, and practically valid and can be strongly recommended. **(JILL BELL)**

This review was reprinted from the TESL Canada Literacy SIG Newsletter. Jill Bell is the co-author of A Handbook for ESL Literacy. She is currently working on her doctoral thesis on second language literacy at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto, Canada.

USING TIME CARDS AND PAYCHECKS IN THE ESL CLASS

Since nothing motivates students more than the idea of getting paid, I decided to incorporate a system of time cards and paychecks into the overall syllabus of my literacy class. The system successfully teaches dates, time, paychecks, and bank deposit slips. It works as follows: Every day when students arrive, they fill out a simplified time card with the day's date, time of arrival, time of departure and the total number of hours they will spend in class.

The time card is kept on a board which

has alphabetized pockets (A-H/I-P/Q-Z), and it is to be put in the appropriate pocket according to the student's last name. After three weeks, I gather all the time cards and add up the total number of hours each student spent in class. Then I calculate the "gross pay." They receive $8/hour to create more variation in the amount of the final paycheck. I use xeroxed checks from an old defunct checking account of mine. Each student's earnings are a little different since they do not attend class regularly. The next day I present each student with his/her paycheck and a blank deposit slip. I give them an enlarged xeroxed copy of a savings account passbook page with their own account number on it. The students fill out the deposit slip using this account number, endorse the check and deposit it into their savings account. (I keep all of the "passbooks" so they don't get lost. Everything is returned at the end of the semester.) The students are paid once every two or three weeks so that over the course of a semester, they review the skill five to eight times. The first time, depositing the paycheck takes the entire class period. Subsequent times take less and less time. New students are tutored by old students in how to fill out their cards and deposit slips. Eventually, when they have enough money in the accounts, they withdraw some cash using play money and then redeposit it using the lines for currency and coin on the deposit slip.

Initially, I used this system in a three hour a day combined 50/100 (literacy + beginning) class. Presently, I am using it in a one hour a day literacy class. The students in both classes have been very enthusiastic about getting paid. If I forget anything, they remind me. If a new student begins class, they make sure I give him a time card. Even the least literate students eventually learn the skills involved. The question is -Why has this been successful?

Students learn to write the date and time correctly because they practice every day. They observe their peers' time cards and in comparing them to their own, notice and correct their own mistakes. Cooperative learning takes place as the more literate students help the less literate ones. You will note that students learn the difference between writing clock time and writing length of time (1:00/1 hour) which they must find by doing a simple calculation.

The second stage--getting paid--is successful, first of all, because it is repeated several times. However, the repetitions are not in a row over a week and then forgotten. Utilizing the concept of spiral education, the repetitions are spaced out at equal intervals throughout the semester. Secondly, it is successful because the paychecks are individualized. They are the direct result of the students' actions. If a student doesn't come to class, he won't get paid. If he comes to class but forgets to fill out the time card, he still won't get paid. In this way, students are introduced to the American system of accounting for one's work. The third reason is that because the checks are not necessarily the same amount for each student, each must truly read and process the information for himself. Ecah has a different name, address, and account number. Therefore, although they can help one another, they can not copy.

My students often begin using this system before they can read aloud the months, days, numbers, or the words "date, address and name."

I realize that some may question whether they are truly reading. So, I would like to raise the question: "What is reading?" Can someone read because he can pronounce the words he sees? Or can that person read when he can respond to the meaing of the words and symbols he sees? I know how I feel. How about you? **(SARA MCKINNON.**

Sara McKinnon is an ESL teacher at Marin Community College in Kentfield, California. She presented these ideas in the October 1987 CATESOL mini-conference at Canada College.)

PHONICS AND READING

Professor Mary Nelson Bruder put us on to a new book, Charles Perfetti's Reading Ability, in the last newsletter. It was the research in this book that acted as background for her Cracking the Code. We put some questions on Perfetti's "alphabetic principle" to Professor William Grabe of Northern Arizona University, who had reviewed the book favorably in Language (63:1,1987). Our questions reached Prof. Grabe at Stanford where he was attending the LSA Summer Institute. For various understandable reasons he chose to reply in general about second language literacy. We omit our questions here and present Prof. Grabe's edited (with permission) ideas about second language literacy:

I think Perfetti's Reading Efficiency model is a persuasive account of reading ability difference and is relevant for second language concerns as well. It should be clear to anyone who has read the reading literature that there are a number of necessary but not sufficient conditions on the development of reading abilities in English. One of these is learning sound-letter correspondences; another is some metalinguistic awareness of language, including alphabetic principles. To my reading of Perfetti, however, these concerns are not as central as other skills which must develop. That is to say, these abilities are important skills, but they are not the main arguments of Perfetti's book.

For my own part, I have some reservations about phonics as intense practice for L2 students. L2 students may have even more difficulty with sound-letter correspondences and alphabetic principles than L1 students. That recognition does not necessarily mean that extensive phonics practice is the instructional solution. As you must well know, there are phonics approaches and then there are phonics approaches. And a certain amount of consistent attention to correspondences within contextualized materials and a few contextless exercises for awareness raising seem to be an appropriate L2 approach. In truth, however, the whole issue of phonics for L-2 students needs further study.

Theory and instruction are two areas that do not necessarily overlap. What 2 people believe is appropriate for a theory of reading abilities will not mean that those 2 people will agree on what specifically should be taught or how specific skills should be taught. I would be happy to defend Perfetti's theory; I would be less happy to defend, without review, a phonics approach for L2 reading. I would first want to see that the materials might be appropriate.

Just to note a final point in this regard, phonics has a great advantage for L1 contexts in that students have the oral phonemic system in place and have thousands of oral words to draw upon. Since L2 students do not come prepackaged in this way, the usefulness of phonic instruction has to be re-thought carefully. This qualification, however, does not rule out the primary use of phonics for developing sound-letter corresondences in the first place. A this time, I am not fully convinced that phonics practice in L2 is as useful as it may be in L1. To me it is still an open question.

DYSLEXIA AND ESL ADULT LITERACY

(In a recent literacy workshop when the speaker couldn't answer the question of whether there were dyslexics in ESL classes, a member of the class suggested guidelines for diagnosing problems based on her personal experience. We asked her to write them up. Can anyone give us more help or comment on Ms. Clark's suggestions?)

Have you ever wondered about the possibility of determining whether an illiterate student may have learning disabilities? Methods used by native speakers to determine the possibility of learning disabilities may be adapted for use by ESL literacy teachers. When I learned that my son had a learning disability, I devised a list of patterns of behavior that could help teachers identify students for further testing in their classes.

(l) Slanted lists: When asked to list

words or numbers vertically, the list will slant more than usual.

(2) Catching balls: Learning disabled children have difficult catching balls.

(3) Walking on a line: Learning disabled children have difficulty walking on a straight line on the floor.

(4) Reversing words or letters: For example, "b" for "d" or "was" for "saw".

(5) Hand/eye coordination: Have the child clap each time a light is flashed. A child who has difficulty may have trouble responding to other visual stimuli.

(6) Hand/ear coordination: Have the child clap each time a sound is heard. A child who has difficulty coordinating in this way may have problems with verbal commands and explanations.

(7) Time and space concepts: Children with learning disabilities have problems understanding concepts of time and distance. They will guess one week as easily as one month.

(8) Behavior differences: Behavior can be excessively rigid. Students have difficulty adjusting to change or are over- active and unable to sit still. They tend to hold tools or a pencil too tightly.

When #5 revealed our son's difficulty, we learned to read instructions to him aloud, and we gave him ample time to manipulate objects. In five minutes using a ball, a chalk line, a flashlight, a tape with beeps, and a pencil you can arrange a series of tasks that can help you determine whether special techniques will be indicated for your student.

For further information write: Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, 4156 Library Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234...Orton Dyslexia Society, 724 York Road, Baltimore, MY, 21204...National Network of Learning Disabled Adults, 808 North 82nd Street, #F2, Scottsdale, AZ 85257.

This quote from New England Journal of Medicine, 316:20, reprinted in the People's Medical Journal, July, 1987, might also be of interest. "People with dyslexia have trouble reading. They're usually of normal or superior intelligence. It's just that their brains don't seem to process words or letters normally. There's been a lot of debate in the past about what causes dyslexia. Current theories revolve around some wiring error in the brain. Well, now researchers at MIT have come up with a very unique finding. Normally when you are asked to look at something, you line up your eyeball with that object. You do this so that the image of the object falls on the most sensitive part of the retina, called the fovea. This is where you have the highest concentration of sensitive receiving cells. Therefore, you get the clearest image. Anything off to the side is not seen as clearly. In other words your peripheral vision is not as good a your central vision.

It turns out that dyslexics have their best vision off to the side. When they look at a letter, they do not see it well. But letters an inch or two off center are actually perceived better. While this is a strange finding, it does tell us that there is a specific neurological processing problem here. The suggestion is that we teach dyslexics to concentrate on the letters they are not looking at. This could possibly lead to an effective treatment in the future." (ANNETTE CLARK, student in the UC Berkeley Extension Division ESL certificate program)

AN ADULT LITERACY SESSION

Organized by Pat Rigg, a symposium on "Directions in Adult Literacy Research" was held at the International Reading Association Convention in Anaheim on May 6, featuring a number of literacy specialists. Arlene Fingeret (North Carolina State Univ.) described the ethnographic approach to adult literacy research, citing studies which have utilized it (Amoroso, H. C. Jr, ERIC No. Ed 248 410, etc.). She mentioned that ethnographic data provides a base-line for later quantitative studies, as notably exemplified by Scribner and Cole's The Psychology of Literacy.

Judy Richardson (Chair, Adult Learning Division, College Reading Association) advocated networking among literacy providing organizations and stressed the

need for people working in the field to understand the territory which each organization covers.

Rhoda Johnson (Univ. of Pittsburgh) spoke about volunteers' needs and the lack of programs for training them.

Francis Kazemek (E. Washington Univ.) addressed the question: why have U.S. academicians had so little impact on adult literacy?, faulting his colleagues for their refusing to acknowledge the political aspect of the field. Among his suggestions: given the social nature of literacy, urge program directors to shift from one-on-one instruction to small groups.

Larry Mikulecky (Indiana Univ.) based on his quantitative studies in workplace literacy, urged tht programs integrate reading and writing with job related tasks. He noted the dirth of commercially published materials for adult literacy instruction.

Pat Rigg, alone among the speakers who focused on ESL literacy, mentioned work being done with immigrant groups in Canada and Australia. In the U.S., attention is mainly towards job/vocational English, leaving out both the young and older populations, she noted.

In closing, Anabel Newman (Indiana Univ.) who was session moderator gave a summary review of the activities of Project Literacy U.S. ("PLUS") and the Coalition for Literacy, of which IRA is a member.

In an afernoon session titled "Political Issues Affecting Literacy", co-chaired by Barbara Flores (Arizona State) and Bess Altwerger (Univ. of New Mexico), Pat Rigg and Frances Kazemek led an open discussion: current literacy efforts assume that volunteers can do the job; in the popular media, illiteracy statistics are regularly linked with crime and other negative stereotypes; efforts such as Project PLUS legitimize societal divisions and reinforce "blaming the victim."

Susan Lytle (Univ. of PA) reported on research carried out at the Center for Literacy, Philadelphia. From interviewing learners about their conception of the learning process, she found: 1) learners had attitudes of embarrassment about their literacy skills, yet did many teaching tasks in their everyday lives; 2) adults came into the program with 'autonomous' views of literacy; 3) learners who had internalized a phonics view of the reading process, had never thought about the reading/writing connection.

Arlene Fingeret, in the role of discussant of Lytle's paper, summed up some of the sessions' themes: 1) illiterate adults are being used to diffuse attention from real issues in U.S. life, such as economic distress, underemployment, etc. 2) literacy is not being talked abut as a way to gain upward social mobility but as necessary for maintaining the individual's status quo 3) the topic of social control and literacy has been overlooked by researchers and practitioners alike.

(Compressed notes from the Adult Literacy sessions at the International Reading Association Convention)

Fraida Dubin, University of Southern California (Professor Dubin teaches a course in literacy at USC.)

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE

Virginia French Allen has written a book called Reading for Life: A First Book for Adults and Their Tutors (Spring Institute, 4891 Independence St. #100, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033), and many have asked her if her book could be used in ESL. She wrote this reply which she has given us permission to shorten. Many ESL teachers are now using their talents to work with native speakers in adult literacy. They ideally suited because their work in ESL has taught them patience and tact, a respect for individuals, and resourcefulness in finding ways to help students learn. They have also learned to recognize differences between oral and written English. Furthermore, many ESL techniques are indispensable for teaching nonliterate adults. All students, native and ESL, need to hear sentences and longer passages read aloud by an experienced reader while they follow the line of print with their eyes. And all need to be given certain clues to the correspondence between sound and letters.

But there are differences, too: Here are some:

(1) *Vocabulary range* The adult native speaker uses (orally) thousands of words that only the rare ESL student knows: words like *chunk, super, phony, hassle.....*

(2) *Familiarity with American Culture* Unlike the average ESL student, the speaker of English knows about the use of "Doc" for "Doctor", knows that "Pat" could be a nickname for either sex, knows that "sympathy" is not a word usually found on birthday cards. A book for native speakers which (quite properly) takes advantage of this wider knowledge of culture--and the greater range of vocabulary--can be discouraging to ESL students.

(3) *Working knowledge of grammatical structure* Native speakers readily understand a sentence like this when they HEAR it. "When firefighters pulled him from the chimney, Johathan 'looked like an old-time chimney sweeper, completely covered with soot,' said Lt. Chuck Smith." Unlike ESL students, all that native speakers need to learn is to proess such sentences when they up in print.

(4) *Grasp of phonemic contrasts* Even illiterate native speakers can hear and respond to differences between spoken pairs like BAG/BUG, NOT/NOTE, SHIP/SHEEP....unlike ESL students, they need only learn how those distinctions are signaled by letters in writing and print.

FROM THE TESOL NEWSLETTER

Suzanne M. Griffin's "Serving Non-literate Adults in ESL Classes: We Need Some Answers" appeared in the June, 1987, issue of the TESOL Newsletter. In it she states that there are four distinct categories of learners in literacy classes. (l) Those who have no reading or writing skills, though their language has a commonly used written form. (2) Those with three or four years of formal education or possess minimal literacy skills. (3) Those who are fully literate in their own language, but have a different alphabet. Naturally, all these types are usually to be found in the same class, due to lack of finances for small classes.

The methods used to teach literacy have been influenced by linguistics, language acquisition theory, first language reading methods, and practices used with students with learning disabilities.

Griffin quotes Ranard (TESOL Newsletter, April, 1984). Ranard feels the methods used should be tested systematically to learn what really works. He also felt these questions should be addressed.

(l) At what point is an ESL student considered literate? How many hours are required for this?

(2) Should native language literacy precede literacy in English?

(3) Is it more effective to teach oral proficiency first or can the three skills of speaking, reading, and writing be taught concurrently?

Griffin adds her questions to these:

(4) How can methods used to foster first language literacy in children be used with preliterate and illiterate adults?

(5) Can theories on second language reading research be extended to second language literacy acquisition?

(6) What information from perceptual psychology and cognitive psychology can help us understand the literacy acquisition process in adults.

(7) How much difference does context or medium of presentation make at the different stages of the second language acquisition process?

Griffin states the frustration of our lack of answers to these questions. "To graduate or promote students who have not become literate AFTER HUNDREDS OF HOURS OF INSTRUCTION (caps mine) is extremely difficult for educators who believe that everyone can learn. ...failure for these people has resulted in human costs that far exceed the welfare dollars...By continuing to tolerate a vacuum of theory and a lack of certainty about appropriate pedigogical practices in this area we are ignoring one of the most

critical and costly problems in our profession." (summarized by **Susan Lawson**)(Griffin's first question "(1) At what point is an ESL student considered literate? How many hours are required for this?" is asked again and again by people who visit our classes. We find this strange since no one ever asks, "At what point is a person considered bilingual?" Does my junior high school Latin make me bilingual in Latin? How many refugee programs have been defunded because they chose to say, "In six weeks students will be able to ....." ? How many new proposals now say the same thing and then carefully select participants who they know have either reached that level or most assuredly will? There is a literacy requirement in the new immigration law. Has anyone been able to find out how they define "literate"?

One Yemeni student came to one of our classes recently to become literate. He had failed the literacy test in his citizenship interview. The examiner had said, handing him a pen and a piece of paper, "Here, Mr. Saleh, write something for me." Mr. Saleh replied, "You write something." Mr. Saleh can now write his name, address, and "San Francisco is a nice city." We are holding our breath that he gets the same examiner in his next interview. Another student just called today to say that in his citizenship interview he was asked to write, "It is raining today." and his name and address. He passed. [The Editors]

THE ACQUISITION OF L2 LITERACY

(The ESL literacy Newsletter has requested a number of papers presented at TESOL '87 that seem to have application to ESL adult literacy. We will be presenting reports on a number of these papers in this and subsequent issues of the newsletter.)

Neil J. Anderson of the University of Texas at Austin presents research data and hypotheses to be tested in the area of L2 literacy acquisition. He begins by briefly mentioning the significant body of L1 reading research and then proceeds into a more thorough review of the much less extensive body of research in L2 reading. The primary purpose of Anderson's paper is to present the L1 literacy acquisition model of Juell, Griffin and Gough ("Acquisition of Literacy". Journal of Educational Psychology, 78,4 (1986)). After a discussion of the L1 model, Anderson applies it to L2 literacy acquisition. He concludes with questions for much needed research in L2 literacy acquisition.

The data base of L2 reading research is comprised of 81 studies. Bernhardt claims that there is a "virtual ignorance" of L1 reading models among L2 researchers.

Anderson reviews some significant L2 research literature and points out opposing theories in L2 reading, i.e. whether L2 reading is a language problem or a reading problem. The weight of the research he cites leans toward the theory that L2 reading problems are in fact language problems.

Anderson cites Alderson and Urquhart's Reading in a Foreign Language as providing a "comprehensive review of major studies in L2 reading." A/U cite confusion and conflicting data in the L2 research. Emphasis has been placed on product rather than process, studies have been qualitative rather than quantitative, not enough relevant information on the individuals studied has been gathered.

Anderson feels that Juell, Griffin and Gough's L1 model for children can be applied to L2 students. "Phonemic awareness" is the key component of the J/G/G model. He quotes Juell as defining phonemic awareness as the "ability to *orally* perceive and manipulate the sounds in words [italics in original]". "This ability to focus attention from the meaning of words to sound properties is a key to literacy acquisition. J/G/G feel that phonemic awareness is the most 'powerful predictor of literacy acquisition.' When a reader can break the spoken word down into phonemes, they are more successful in acquiring the ability to read." But Anderson then goes on to cite conflicting evidence as to whether phonemic awareness comes before someone learns to read or is a consequence of having learned to read.

Anderson feels the model suggested by Juel, Griffith, and Gough provides a starting point for L2 research. These questions arise from that model when applied to L2 research: "(1) Does the model hold true for adults as well as

children acquiring literacy skills? (2) Can adults be taught phonemic awareness skills? (3) Does this model hold true as a model of L2 literacy acquisition? (4) Can nonliterate adults be taught phonemic awareness skills? (5) If phonemic awareness skills can be taught to adults, is literacy acquisition facilitated? (6) Do successful L2 readers possess phomemic awareness skills? (8) Do phonemic awareness skills transfer from L1 to L2 for students who are literate in L1?"

Should ESL students become literate in their own language first? There are few studies, but Anderson feels that they support the idea "that beginning literacy is facilitated through initial literacy training in the student's native language."

Anderson's references contain these which seem to apply directly to L2 literacy: Plaister, Ted."L2 Reading for the L1 Illiterate Adult from Preliterate Societies." Working Papers Department of English as a Second Language. University of Hawaii at Manoa, 3.2 (1984); Robson, Barbara. "Hmong Literacy, Formal Education, and Their Effects on Performance in an ESL Class." The Hmong in the West. Eds. Bruce Downing and Douglas Olney. Minneapolis, MN: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, U of Minn. 1982; Hatch, Evelyn "Research on Reading a Second Language." Journal of Reading Behavior. 6:1 (1974). (Reviewed by **CAROLE GLANZER**)

BOOK REVIEWS

MENTAL HEALTH AND ESL

Cohon, J. Donald, M. Lucey, M. Paul, J Penning. **PREVENTIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN THE ESL CLASSROOM: A Handbook for Teachers.** American Council for Nationalities Service, 1986.(Available from ACNS, 95 Madison Ave. New York, NY 10016. $6.50) "Some 20-25% of all refugees are 'at risk' of suffering disabling mental illness. The incidence of paranoia and schizophrenia is as much as 100% higher among all immigrants than among the general U.S. population. Depression (from moderate to disabling) is the biggest single emotional problem of refugees." These are not pleasant facts. This book is full of information on how to recognize, understand, and deal with this problem. Its audience is ESL teachers, literacy included, which makes it pertinent to us.

The handbook is divided into three sections: (1)User's Guide to Primary Prevention Theory (2) Application of Primary Prevention and Promotion of Mental Health in the ESL Classroom (3) Resources.

"Stress" and "stessors" are words that appear all through the handbook. To reduce stress in the classroom the ESL teacher is advised to assume the role of: A good listener.../ A mediator between cultures.../ A provider of information.../ A facilitator in problem solving and the rehearsal of coping skills.../A model or representative of a culture allowing students to observe cultural differences and to draw conclusions about these differences.

A classroom conducive to the promotion of mental health has a low anxiety level, fosters feelings of belongingness and success, is receptive to student issues and cultural traditions...

The authors suggest that we enhance the self-esteem of our students, help develop a feeling of success, help develop pride in cultural heritage, help develop a support system, help develop a sense of security (making friends and knowing neighbors).

One suggested lesson about neighborhood harrassment contains the following drawing with these questions for the students: DEFINE THE CONTENT: What do you see? etc. DEFINE THE PROBLEM: How does the woman feel? etc. PERSONALIZE THE PROBLEM: Has this ever happened to you? etc. DISCUSS THE PROBLEM WITHIN A SOCIO-ECONOMIC/CULTURAL CONTEXT: In your country/culture, are people alone much? etc. DISCUSS ALTERNATIVES/ CONSEQUENCES: What can she do about this? etc.

The resources section is full of helpful material especially those who prepare their own material. These names

come up often, Stevick, Krashen, Wallerstein, Freire which helps tell you where the authors are coming from. It suggests writing to the following office for free material and a catalog: Refugee Materials Center, U.S. Department of Education, Executive Hills North, 10220 N. Executive Hills Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri 64153.

THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

Many references have been made in our newsletters to the LEA. For an analysis of the history of the idea of LEA prior to 1971, see **Ronald Morris. Success and Failure in Learning to Read.** Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1979. Morris says LEA pre-dates the San Diego Project and Roach Van Allen. He found, dealing with children, that "rather a wide range of [LEA] ideas and practices" existed. He thinks the following faults caused the loss of interest in LEA: (a) Failure to organize sufficiently for the systematic building of skills (b) Restrictive content (only the learner's) (c) Unjustified assumptions that the learner would transfer the interest in his own ideas to those of others. He feels that newer versions of LEA now override these drawbacks, and he ends up encouraging its reappraisal "in the light of modern linguistic knowldge."

Charles A. Perfetti (Reading Ability. NewYork:Oxford U Press, 1985) thinks LEA is NOT the system to use. He bases his conclusions on his and his colleagues research at the U of Pittsburgh and that of Evans and Carr ("Curricular Emphasis and Reading Development: Focus on Language or Focus on script." Symposium conducted at the Biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Develpment. Detroit, MI.) and writes this intriguing footnote: According to Evans and Carr, "...the educational district that funded the study wanted an outcome other than the one obtained. The report has been ignored, if not actually suppressed by its sponsors. This is one hopes, an atypical example of the difficulty encountered in having research make a positive impact in education."(p.252).

All this research is based on native speaking children as subjects. We seem to look in vain for ESL adults as subjects. Ignoring the interesting subjects we could offer them in our classes, I wonder if researchers have looked at the literacy situation in the whole world especially in Third World countries. I have worked in 4 developing countries and a great number of adults in those countries are not native speakers of the National Language and are thus learning to read in either a second language or a distantly related dialect. What do we know to help them with their unique problems?

Note this quote from a review of a paper on L-2 literacy by V. John-Steiner and C. Panofsky (Language, 62:2, 1986): "There is great need to improve instructional approaches in Language 2 literacy, but much work in this area, motivated by pragmatic rather than theoretical concerns, has failed to frame maximally productive research questions."

THE ENGLISH ALPHABET

Here is a comment on the English alphabet from a native Chinese speaker, a linguist in this country, commenting or rather reacting to an annoying suggestion that the Chinese drop the character writing system and go with Pinyin or some other alphabetic system (Language,62:3, 1986): "English must rank with Chinese as one of the worst writing systems in the world, since 40-odd sounds of English are spelt in some 600 ways. CF the vowel [o] in the orthographic guises of <so>, <sow>, <sew>, <oh>, <owe>, <dough>, <doe>, <beau>, <soak>, <soul>; conversely the same letter <o> represents a gamut of vocalic elements occurring in words like <so>, <to>, <on>, <honey>, <horse>, <woman>, <women>,< borough>. One principal source of the apparent arbitrariness of English orthography is the complex system of morphophonemic

rules such as those which mediate <wild/wilderness>, <native/national>, <gymnast/gymnasium>. Replacing the spelling with say IPA transcription would buy phonetic transparency at the cost of morphological opacity. This is the reason for Chomsky and Halle's (1968:49) otherwise surprising claim that ' [English] conventional orthography is...a near optimal system for the lexical representation of English words.'"

PHONICS

We did our best to get as much on phonics as we could for this number. We stumbled twice and then found a very good one.

The first stumble was a patent for a "communications apparatus and process, particularly formulated to eliminate orthographic inconsistencies in a language" that, according to the New York Times Saturday patent column, is "particularly useful in teaching English as a second language and in overcoming illiteracy." Boy! It seemed worth the $1.50 the patent office wanted. It wasn't. I used to think the Patent Office had standards. It doesn't.

Just one example should suffice. "...'E' is the representation for the standard English verbalized component, 'e'. To produce this sound--the mandible is slightly dropped, the lips are open, the tip of the tongue is in the normal position, and the sides of the tongue are in the normal position to allow the vocalized expiring breath to escape through the mouth." Ok, now go ahead and do it. Did you do an [iy] as in ME or an [e] as in MET? From the sample paragraph illustrating this system you should have done MET. There is no indication of what represents [ey] as in ATE and no word in the sample paragraph has an [ey] sound to help us. I'll stop now but first this from their sample orthography exactly as printed in the patent abstract: "STANDRD UWRhOGRUFY NUW LONGR IFEKTS hU LEVL UV LITRUSY NESUSERY FUWR AWR ADVANST SUWSΘYUTY." (**Patent number: 4,684,348,** Inventor Grace M. Raynor, August 4, 1987)

I sent away for **Get Back to Phonics: 31 Days to More Effective Reading** by Barbara Nemmers Shattuck, Step by Step Publications, Norfolk, NE, 1985, ($10.95 gulp!),which is a "step by step approach." The problem is all the steps lead backward. But at least there are no "slightly dropped mandibles" or "normal tongue positions". The descriptions are pretty bad though and the material is enough to drive even the most motivated student home to watch TV.

Miriam Balmuth's **The Roots of Phonics**, Mcgraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1982, is well worth reading. Dr. Balmuth is a professor of education. Her research into phonics led her into history, descriptive linguistics, phonetics, psycholinguistics, the history of education and on and on. When people write within their own field, they never use "the famous linguist X" or the "well known psychologist Y". It's just Bloomfield or Sapir or whoever. In the first part of the book on the history of English and the English alphabet, all necessary to her thesis, Dr. Balmuth makes for somewhat uncomfortable reading. But only somewhat since her references include Scragg, Jespersen, Quirk and Wrenn, Marckwardt, Daniel Jones. I've looked for reviews of this book by more competent reviewers, but couldn't find any.

What I personally found fascinating was near the end of the book, the part that deals with the history of the teaching of reading. Balmuth claims that Messerli is right in ascribing to Horace Mann the first use of the word "phonics" to mean "the sounds of the letters" as it is used in the teaching of reading. The original OED contains only the older definition. What of the new edition? If Messerli is right, Americans not only coined "literacy" to mean the ability to read and write, we also gave a new meaning to "phonics".

But Balmuth goes on to say that, contrary to what many think (even Rudolf Flesch got this one wrong), Horace Mann came home from his trip to Prus-

sia in 1843 more than ever convinced of the superiority of the "whole word" or "analytic" method or "read for meaning first" method for teaching reading. And as part of that method, he wanted not the letter name, but the **sound** of the letter to be taught. Both these ideas were in oppostion to the system at the time called the "alphabet-spelling method." Some people now who reject the "whole word" approach, and advocate only phonics have misunderstood Mann's true position.

I found this a very interesting and informative book. Have any of you found reviews of it?

JUST ARRIVED

We have just received **A Guideline for Teaching Literacy: A compentency-based curriculum for use with adult ESL students,** edited by Dee Ann Holisky, George Washington University, a 310 Project, Virginia Department of Adult Education, 1985. We'll try to find someone to review it more thoroughly for the next number. It is not protected by copyright so you can copy any or all of it providing you give the editor credit.

The introduction says the book presents an eclectic approach (phonics and meaning approaches), gives guidelines for teaching adults versus children, should be used in a competency based oral/aural ESL class not in a step by step literacy class, includes a literacy placement test developed by Don Ranard, presents a script chosen for writing in both upper case and upper case-lower case (i.e. NAME and Name) but we don't have the drill sheets to see in what order letters are presented. Calendars are presented but numbers included which means they are good only for the month the numbers match the day of the week, a bibliography is presented with copyright dates for books up to 1985, encourages the use of LEA stories and advises that they be corrected, competency based to the nth degree, great stress on words as opposed to sentences in context. It's a hefty package of material and well worth your time to look at it. For information, write Dee Ann Holinsky, English, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEDERALLY FUNDED LITERACY PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.

The Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs has a list of projects they fund for ESL literacy. 3,997 students from 20 languages in 13 states are involved. Grace Holt from Sacramento, CA, told us about her project in the Vol.1:1 of this newsletter. There may be one near you open for observation. For a list of projects and their distinguishing features (which in some cases seem to include many other things than literacy) write: Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Educaton, Washington, D.C. 20202.

COMPUTERS AND LITERACY (BUT NOT COMPUTER LITERACY)

LEAP 1: FUNCTIONAL LITERACY USING AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH Educational Activities, Inc. for Apple, TRS-80, and IBM, $295 was reviewed in the DNEA Network News, August 1987 by John Fleischman. This software uses the language experience approach to teach reading and writing skills. It was designed to be used with adolescents and adults. It directs the computer to develop lessons from the student's text input, compiles individual student word banks, and provides follow-up activities. After each of the lessons, students must work with a teacher or tutor to edit the input text. "The overall program is easy to use, is menu driven, interactive and is based on the student's input."

LOOKING AT THE ILLITERATE

In the last number we reviewed James

Paul Gee's "Orality and Literacy". This quote from an article by Steven R. Weisman in the New York Times, 10-27-87, reviewing the Indian epic The Mahabharata now playing in New York seems appropriate: "One can hardly meet anyone [in India], for example, who has not heard the stories of these epics in childhood from a family member or someone else in the household. **In India's villages, the popularity of the epics and the ability of people to tell the stories obliterate the Western impression that illiteracy is the equivalent of ignorance."**

For the next number, please send a 39 cent self-addressed stamped business -sized envelope to Susan Lawson, ESL Literacy, Alemany CCC, 750 Eddy St., San Francisco, CA 94109. We want especially to thank Fran Baron, Director of Alemany, for printing this number. [Carole Glanzer, Susan Lawson, Jack Wigfield, Editors]

ADDENDUM

PICTURES REVISITED

Our last number contained many positive and negative uses of pictures. One teacher told me about this incident which recently occurred in her class. The lesson came from ACTION ENGLISH PICTURES, Alemany Press, Inc., Hayward,CA, 1985. Page 71 contains four pictures involved with actions some Americans go through when they open a package.

Picture one was seen by students as someone with one present. Picture 2 was seen as someone with three presents. The woman in picture 2 was seen as hot tempered or angry. Some thought she had stumbled. The meanings of the pictures which the authors meant occurred to the right, and once the teacher had explained them, the pictures made sense to the students. We bring our meaning to the picture, not always vice-versa.

TIME CARDS

The following are examples of time cards from Sara McKinnon's article.

DATE	TIME IN	TIME OUT	TOTAL
9/8/87	12:00	1:00	1
10/8/87	12:00	1:00	1
11/8/87	12:00	1:00	1

DATE	TIME IN	TIME OUT	TOTAL
10/1 87	12:00	1:00	1
1/28 7	12.00	1:00	1
10/5/87	12.00	1:00	1

ESL ADULT LITERACY

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INTERVIEW WITH PAT RIGG

(I first met **Pat Rigg** and heard her talk about the Language Experience Approach at a literacy conference in Toronto, Canada, in 1978. She is now a consultant with American Language and Literacy in Tucson. She is a co-editor of TESOL's Children and ESL: Integrating Perspectives. She will be the chair of TESOL's Adult Education Interest Section in 1988-89. In 1987 she wrote an article called "Using the Language Experience Approach with ESL Adults" published in Literacy in a Second Language: Special Issue of Literacy Exchange, New South Wales Adult Literacy Council. This is a summary of that paper in an interview format. When we had questions, we wrote to Pat and she answered us, so this is an up-date of her article as well.)

Q: What is the Language Experience Approach?
A: It's student generated/created reading material. It can be created with groups or individuals.
Q: Why use the Language Experience Approach?
A It's hard to find suitable reading material. ESL students are usually a very heterogeneous group with different educational, linguistic, and experiential backgrounds. LEA is the best source of comprehensible input. It's THEIR subject matter, THEIR grammar, THEIR vocabulary.
Q: Some people have looked at LEA as exploiting the student's Interlanguage which is their strongest second language the next best thing to learning in their native language. Do you agree with that?
A: Yes. You pointed that out to me years ago, and I still think you're right.
Q: Who have you read that has influenced you?
A: Ken and Yetta Goodman, Frank Smith, M.A. K. Halliday, and Paulo Freire mainly.
Q: Carol Chomsky has this quote from Freire: "If a word is to be born of the creative powers of the learner it cannot be deposited in his mind."
A: I agree. LEA stresses the equality of teacher and student working together toward a goal. It's a learning process for all involved.
Q: How does your approach work?
A: The students have (1) something to say (2) someone to say it to (3) and some reason why a written form is better than oral. They start out with a clear purpose and audience. The audience can be the class itself or a small magazine or collection of recipes to distribute to others.
Q: Any words of caution?
A: Yes. Refrain from taking over. Patience is essential. Don't alter or rephrase what the students dictate. Your goal is to draw out; not deposit.
Q: How do you start?
A: Freire starts with a detailed study of the students' community and then, using pictures illustrating community problems,

gets his students to dictate the reading material.
Q: That's almost impossible for most of us.
A: Right. What I do is to use pictures that illustrate common situations or problems that many of my students face. One of my favorites is a picture of a brown-skinned woman, slumped against a wall, holding a baby; both are very poorly dressed with a large safety pin pinching together the edges of the baby's dress. Above them on the wall is a photo of a well-fed, well-dressed, middle-class, blond woman with her baby. This stark contrast has drawn out some vivid student contributions.
Q: Where do you get your pictures?
A: Magazines. I find them preferable to commercially prepared ones for ESL students. I prefer authentic people in realistic situations.
Q: How about photos that students bring in or take themselves?
A: Great. I use them all the time. Especially when they do autobiographies.
Q: Do you only use pictures?
A: No. Sometimes I use a story.
Q: Like what?
A: Things like Studs Terkel's oral histories on the Depression, World War II or work. Some students' stories or poems are also good.
Q: How do you handle stories?
A: I read them aloud and then we discuss them. I try to get the class to discuss what the story means to them. How they relate to it.
Q: Then what?
A: Then they write their own story.
Q: How does that work?
A: After the discussion, the students dictate sentences for the scribe to write.
Q: Who is the scribe?
A: It can be the teacher or a student.
Q: On the blackboard?
A: Yes, or an overhead projector. Or in a tutorial on a piece of paper.
Q: Does the scribe just write it?
A: No, as the scribe writes it, s/he reads it aloud so the students can watch the oral langauge being transformed to written..
Q: How do you know the students are looking at what is being read?
A: I have the scribe run a finger under what is being read.
Q: But...
A: Relax. I encourage natural pronunciation and conversational speed.
Q: Do they read it just once?
A: No. Several times. That allows time to make sure the scribe is right, to revise if the class wants to, and to memorize.
Q: Memorize?
A: Yes. Memorization of the text helps the beginning readers read it later on.
Q: We have been told that memorization is a no-no in ESL now.
A: Not in literacy.
Q: What if a student makes a mistake?
A: **DON'T CORRECT IT.**
Q: (In an anguished voice) Why?
A: (1) It's the students' material, which is therefore the easiest for them to read (2) This is a literacy, not a grammar activity. (3) It shows the teacher the structures and vocabulary that the students are using now. Some of these can be the focus of grammar activities later.
Q: What if a student wants to change/ correct it?
A: If the author of the sentence accepts the change, fine. Only then.
Q: Why should one student copy another student's mistake?
A: Actually, that doesn't happen often. Try copying some of the dialog from Toni Morrison's wonderful Beloved; you'll catch yourself adding -ed and -s.
Q: Well....
A: I am after meaning and proximity to the students' own second languages ,and if I stop to worry about a final -s or a missing -ing, I lose meaning and often the class's participation, too..
Q: But you are reinforcing bad habits, aren't you?
A: I don't think so. In the 1950's people talked about language as a set of habits.
Q: That never did answer the question of how people created a new sentence.
A: Right. We develop language by trying things, by taking risks. Errors now are viewed as indicators of growth in language, not as symptoms of diseased language to be stamped out.
Q: I suppose I agree with "Begin where the student is".
A: Yes, and in the process of learning to read and write, LEA tells you where the student really IS and where in their oral/ aural development they need help.

Q: So if they use a past form correctly, then they probably know it.
A: Probably.
Q: OK. I do remember correcting some students' writing and then, when they read it back to me, they read it not as it was correctly written, but as they had written it originally. Their interlanguage superceded what they saw on the page. Ok.
A: Yes, but remember, copying what they dictate doesn't mean inventing strange spellings to capture each students' pronunciation. We're not Hyman Kaplan's Mr. Pockheel.
Q: What do you mean?
A: Pronunciation varies, but Scots, Australians, Canadians, and Georgia Crackers all spell the same. Spelling according to our students' pronunciations rather than according to their intentions produces nonsense, which of course is unreadable.
Q: Nonsense to you, but not to them perhaps. But, OK, OK, the students have dictated a message. Now what?
A: Now the revision process takes over.
Q: Aha! Correcting.
A: No. The teacher's questions are more like, "Is this the way you want it? Do you want to move anything? Do you want to add anything?"
Q: And once they have agreed on a text, then what?
A: Then they move from being speakers to being readers and writers. And when the students have completed their revision, a neat copy of the final version needs to be made.
Q: What do you mean by "neat copy" and who does it?
A: I type a copy and xerox or ditto copies for everyone.
Q: It sounds like your students are different from mine. It sounds like they are literate in their own language, and that they are familiar with a roman alphabet. What about pre-literates with no educational background whose own language is still unwritten?
A: LEA works with them, too.
Q: Do you use the same system?
A: Almost. The main points I've outlined are still true. It's very important with these people that you **DON'T CORRECT.**
Q: Why?
A: For the same reasons I've outlined and more especially because if you correct, you'll discourage them, and that is the biggest danger with these students. Accept <u>whatever</u> they dictate and when they copy, accept whatever they write.
Q: Even spelling?
A: Yes. Here don't correct spelling. They are not going to fossilize. They will develop. LEA in one sense removes students one step from the ownership of their own material. It's important also to let them write, however clumsily, without correction to give them a sense of being able to do it themselves.
Q: What kind of letters do they make, ones like this typewriter or BLOCK LIKE THIS or cursive?
A: Different folks make different strokes. Again, I focus on the message, not on calligraphy.
Q: What about the "neat copy" for these students.
A: It's very important that they get one and it's also important that they get it quickly. It's great if the classroom has a typewriter or a word processor.
Q: There is a lot of emphasis being placed on cooperative learning or group work now. What do you think about this for literacy and LEA?
A: Whenever possible students can be writing partners. One may act the scribe for another.
Q: Outline this process.
A: Suppose through a discussion. a group decides that the school needs a child care facility. The teacher acts as a resource to tell them who to contact. They then divide into pairs or groups and work out letters to that person.
Q: Does the teacher just knit?
A: Yes, if that keeps him from interferring.
Q: Come on.
A: The teacher is there as a resource person to resolve spelling problems or settle arguments over grammar. Think of the teacher as an editor now.
Q: Where does all this writing end up?
A: The letters end up in mailboxes, where they belong. Some stories and poems can make up a little magazine or newsletter published by the class.
Q: Can you do anything else with the students' writing?

A: Yes. Cloze activities where certain words in a passage are deleted and the students fill in the blanks is one.
Q: Every 5th to 10th word?
A: No. I delete words that can easily be replaced by several synonyms or synonomous phrases. I try to get many different possible fillers for each blank, and I encourage discussion of possible fillers.
Q: What else?
A: Cut up the story. Mix it up. Have the students put the pieces back together.
Q: What else?
A: Cut up the words and make a word bank. This is not my favorite because its a word centered approach rather than a holistic one.
Q: Don't some students like it though?
A: Yes. And for them it's good.
Q: OK now what happens when they are faced with the real world where someone else has given them the reading material, a note from the PTA for example?
A: It's difficult for them, of course, especially the farther it is from their ideas and phrasing.
Q: But you suggest extending their reading beyond their own work.
A: Yes. Ask them to collect words or sentences they see at home or on the street. Bring them to class to discuss. Compare what they bring to what they have used in their own LEA material.
A: How would you summarize your approach?
Q: With the focus always on meaning and with students and teacher always co-learners, the LEA lends itself to a holistic and humanistic curriculum. LEA provides for a wide variety of reading material, material that every student finds easy to read and interesting to read; more, LEA moves the students from reading their own dictated material into writing. It's hard to find commercial materials that will do as much, as well, as cheaply.
Q: Thanks, Pat.

"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

Everyone agrees that it's important to be able to write one's name correctly, in the proper space or on the appropriate line, in the order called for, on an official form. Cantonese and Spanish speaking students enter our literacy program able to write their names, though often not in the appropriate place. We introduce them to "appropriate" writing by teaching them to print and read one another's first names on their first class day. Following are the methods and materials we use in a two-hour lesson that incorporates both interviewing and picture/text association exercises related to first names.

MATERIALS: Polaroid camera, photocopier, opaque projector, and prepared worksheets.

METHODS: *Session 1:*

A. Students break into pairs and, after teacher demonstration, practice soliciting and saying their first name ("What's your first name?")

B. Teacher, using blackboard, makes a facsimile of interview worksheet (Appendix A), and asks students to "show me" how they spell their names.

C. Teacher distributes worksheets. Students practice reading two sentences on the sheet, and then, in pairs, they fill in information about themselves. (Only #1 in each pair gets a worksheet. #1 fills in his/her first name, then asks #2 "What's your first name? Show me." #2 then fills in his/her name. Then #2's receive a worksheet--"You're #1 now." --and reverse the interview.)

D. Teacher takes Polaroid photos of the class in a group, against a light background. (Make sure that everyone's face is visible! Take two or three pictures, on different light settings, to get the clearest shot.)

Between sessions: Teacher mounts the photo with clearest facial features on a prepared worksheet, whites out the background with typing correction fluid, draws lines and arrows, and photocopies labeled photo. (Appendix B). (You may have to vary the darkness setting on your photocopier to get optimum results. Lighter settings seem better and, incidentally, use less expensive toner.)

Session 2 : Picture/Text Association

A. Teacher projects the original mounted photo on a white sheet of paper, mounted on the blackboard, so that the photo is on

the paper, but the label lines are on the blackboard.

B. Teacher points to a student's projected image and asks, "Who's that? I don't know. Show me." Students will associate picture with real person and point to student A.

C. Teacher asks student A, "What's your first name? Show me." and gestures to the student's interview worksheet. Student points to own name on worksheet and says it.

D. Student goes to board and asks student A again, "What's your first name? Show me." Student writes first name on board.

E. Now teacher distributes photocopied worksheets. Students fill in their own first names in boxes, then fill in other students' names as steps C and D are repeated.

F. Teacher turns off projector, leaving the names on the board. Teacher asks, "Who's that? Show me." Students will read that person's name and point to him or her.

When students finish the two-hour exercise, they have two documents in hand. The first, coming from the interview, is a transformation of oral language into written language. The second--an illustrated, labeled index to their classmates--is also a transformation, and students will use it extensively in later classes. For several days, classes will warm up with the labeled picture, either in oral exercises or in directed writing exercises in which they "circle' or "underline" a given name. They add the names of students not present on the first day to the "list" at the bottom of the sheet. Teachers lead them in sound/symbol association exercises based on some names ("Wing" becomes "sing", "sting", "ring", etc., in initial consonant and blend exercises). In another lesson, students use name cards like playing cards in a game of name "concentration." The original group photo even gets recycled: Students compose a Language Experience Approach story as they look at the picture projected on the board; then, they read their story, first with the image still projected, and next with the projector turned off and only the story visible.

We encourage multiple associations in our exercises (between spoken and written words, between written words and visual images, between visual images and real objects or people). We know that these associations create links of meaning between what a student knows, and what a student hopes to know.

Our students want to learn to read and write English, but they also want not to be alone as they learn, so we encourage them to depend on one another, and to learn one another's names. Students are now more relaxed with their teachers and their peers than they were before we started stressing names. Cross-cultural exchanges are more frequent, and students depend on people outside their own ethnic group for help in mastering classroom tasks. Attendance has even improved. And everyone now writes their name appropriately, in the proper place on official forms.

(**TIM WALSH**, Director, YMCA Literacy School, San Francisco.)

REVIEW

BENCH MARKS IN READING INSTRUCTION IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM. Hayward, CA: Alemany Press, 1984. George Rathnell has written a highly readable book explaining the evolution of the teaching of reading in the ESL classroom. He shows lesson plans that follow these particular methodologies, balancing the theory with concrete examples.

He states that illiterates must first learn what to expect in a classroom situation: (1) Tolerate a group situation. (2) Concentrate and develop attention span. (3) Use spatial concepts. (4) Develop a stock of concepts. (5) Recognize that abstractions and symbols stand for real things. He feels, "There is no reason for any substantial delay in presenting the written language when teaching illiterates, but rather than holding off written language until all the sounds are" mastered, written forms should be introduced immediately after the oral forms are learned.

Rathnell quotes Ranard: "...literacy is the ability to read and write the materials used in the first part of a beginning class." He lists five objectives for a literacy class with suggested activities, and says that preread-

ing --recognizing similarities and differences in shapes, letters, numbers and words--must come first. He lists a short bibliography of textbooks specifically designed for the illiterate level. This is followed by two sample lessons and an analysis of each lesson.

Other chapters deal with the beginning level, the intermediate, and the advanced. Along the way, he discusses the Direct Method, the Cognitive Approach, and the bilingual movement, among others. He asks if we have improved the teaching of reading to ESL students and answers, "Yes, sort of."

I took a number of his ideas directly into my beginning level classroom. I found his overview clear and helpful. This is a useful book to return to time and again. **(SUSAN LAWSON)**

REVIEW

THE NEW OXFORD PICTURE DICTIONARY by E.C. Parnwell, **INTERMEDIATE WORKBOOK** by Jill Wagner Schimpff, **BEGINNER'S WORKBOOK** by Particia E. Zevin (New York:Oxford University Press, 1988).

The New Oxford Picture Dictionary vocabulary development program now offers a monolingual dictionary, a teacher's guide, a beginner's workbook, an intermediate workbook, a set of four cassettes, vocabulary playing cards and wall charts. Each poster in the wall chart is a large blowup of a page in the dictionary.

The dictionary itself is very attractive. It is larger, has more pages than before, and a different order, this time starting with the family. The items in the pictures are numbered consecutively, so teachers and students won't have to hunt around for the next number. Students will like this dictionary, and teachers will find it helpful to have the large posters on the wall to refer to.

The workbooks by Jill Wagner Schimpff do a good job of following Bloom's taxonomy, especially the second one. As much as I like the deductive and inductive reasoning called for, in many instances I felt the vocabulary called for to do this kind of thinking was beyond the intermediate students at my school I think these books would be good supplementary work in classes that can afford this. In a beginning class the teacher could use this as a main text, if he planned to supply materials to develop structures and fluency himself. **(SUSAN LAWSON)**

REVIEW

LEARNING TO READ IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY by Katherine Wallace (New York:Pergamon Press, 1986) should be on your bookshelf beside Bell and Burnaby's A Handbook for ESL Literacy. Wallace is English, but her bibliography shows she has read the best things from her side AND from this side of the Atlantic. Here are the Goodmans, J. Fishman, J. Cummins, the Clarks, Shirley Brice-Heath, Labov, R. Lakoff, all familiar to Americans and Canadians. She combines this wide reading-academic background with lots of first hand experience in second language literacy by illustrating her theoretical ideas with examples from the students she has taught.

The first part of the book deals with the whole context of the reader who is developing second language literacy. The middle chapters deal with the learner-reader. The last part deals with practical suggestions for teaching and finally with an evaluation of available materials. The final part contains case studies with Wallace's very insightful comments.

This is not a detailed review but there are points which I found very interesting and which I want to comment on.

It's reassuring to see Wallace talking about English intonation in terms of tones, terminology which is traditional in British linguistics. The Vietnamese written language has tone markers, and the pitch contrasts in English can be marked by these Vietnamese tone marks. All, that is, except a high falling tone. The Cantonese tones for the numbers 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, and in the "right" Cantonese dialect, 3, contain the minimum pitch contrasts that English uses as well. In those languages the tones are fixed to the word. In English, of

course, they are not, but the pitches are similar, similar enough to use with your students who have trouble with intonation in their reading. I shudder when I hear that people who speak tone languages must forget their tones. It makes about as much sense as telling them to forget their [m].

Page 92 contains "A case for letter names." In view of her other ideas, I found this section strange. First Wallace says that teaching letter names is "unfashionable." Not in these parts, Ms. Wallace. Just read Mary Nelson Bruder's defense in Vol. 1, No. 2 of this newsletter. Jaws still fall in this country when someone suggests that letter names belong in the oral/aural ESL component since they have everything to do with oral communication and only marginally to do with reading. If someone tells me to take the J street car, I have to connect [jey] with <J>. But to read my name, my students don't have to know it begins with [jey]. **(JACK WIGFIELD)**

REVIEW

SIGNS (Yang's Press, 1171 Pacific Ave., San Francisco, CA 94133, 1988, $4.00) was written by Timothy S. Yang and Mary W. Yang, two teachers in the San Francisco Community College Distict, who came here as immigrants and who know the frustration felt by many immigrants who find themselves surrounded by signs they cannot understand. This small book contains over 150 signs each with a translation in Chinese. The signs range from UP and DOWN and DOOR OPEN for elevators, to FIRE STATION WATCH FOR TRUCKS. The book is meant for Chinese but can be used, with help, by anyone confused by the ubiquitous presence of signs. **(JACK WIGFIELD)**

ENGLISH FAMILY LITERACY

(This article is reprinted with permission from All Write News, a publication of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, a joint program of Roxbury Community College and the University of Massachusetts at Boston.)

The University of Massachusetts at Boston English Family Literacy Project has just completed an annotated bibliography about English Family Literacy. (Available for $3.00--prepaid--from University of Massachusetts at Boston, Program of Bilingual/ESL Studies, Harbor Campus, Boston, MA 02125-3393. Ask for English Family Literacy: An Annotated Bibliography by Andrea Nash.) It surveys the literature on current family literacy theories, issues and projects. For six months, we collected ethnographic studies, program descriptions, academic research, and curriculum development materials pertinent to the following questions: How do families contribute to literacy development? How do their contributions vary according to class and culture? What models are now being used to involve English and limited English speaking families in children's literacy development? What assumptions are these models based on? What alternatives are there to the predominant models? What are the particular issues that must be addressed in programs for non-native English speakers and how is this being done?

When we began collecting materials, we had some ideas about the answers to many of these questions, ideas based on what we had read about the importance of reading to children and providing them with a print-rich home environment. However, once we started exploring the literature, we found evidence that confounded our notion of the optimal home learning environment. The ethnographic studies included reports of reading failure among middle-class students from print-filled environments and reading success among children from low-income, low-literacy families. It became clear that the level of parental literacy skills and the abundance of print at home were not the most important factors in determining reading success for children.

What appeared to be more important were the frequency and quality of family interactions around ordinary, everyday experiences with print. Contrary to a model of parent and child sitting down to practice literacy skills in a structured, schoollike way, the literature pointed to the sharing of routine literacy tasks, as they arise in daily life, as a key component in literacy development. Thus, literacy per se was not taught in the families of suc-

cessful readers. It was acquired as it became significant in enhancing family and community life.

These findings show us that the model of a literate adult helping a child with reading homework is not the only nor, perhaps, even the most appropriate way to improve family literacy especially in the homes of limited English-Speaking children. Yet many current family literacy projects we found are built upon this idea that parents should be trained to be surrogate teachers, extending classroom skills into the home. If per chance, the parents themselves have low literacy skills or are non-native English speakers, these "barriers" to English literacy development are addressed in this model by additional training that will prepare the parents to participate more fully in schoolwork and school activities.

The tendency of the school-based programs toward reshaping the home to carry out school-defined tasks limited the actors and activities involved in family literacy. Many programs are referred to as "parent involvement" projects, words that narrow the pool of family participants and suggest that these participants are not already involved in skills sharing. In fact, the ethnographic research demonstrates that most parents are concerned about their children's school success and have their own culturally-rooted ways of teaching them. However, home learning that does not reflect the mainstream culture is not always recognized or rewarded at school.

The approach of the UMass/Boston English Family Literacy Project is to build on the strengths of the parents by drawing on the rich resources and concerns that they bring with them to class. Rather than assuming that parents must meet school-determined expectations, our curriculum starts with parents identifying their own literacy needs and strengths so that they can take part in shaping their family's literacy development. They do this by extending their own language and literacy skills in the process of exploring language and literacy usage in their families and communities. Because the research suggests that literacy develops to the extent that it is socially significant in learner's lives, content relating to parents' concerns about the issues such as employment, immigration, housing, etc. is also central to our project.

In addition, parents identify their own concerns about schooling. Some of the issues that our students have identified include difficulties reading information sent from the schools (report cards, letters, etc.); difficulties communicating with their children's teachers; conflicts with children who reject the parents' native language; having to keep kids home from school to act as interpreters; inability to understand their children's homework; and problems finding the time and childcare necessary to attend ESL classes.

We are developing and documenting this issue-centered curriculum process and will be reporting on it in the upcoming year. **(ANDREA NASH)**

(We can't recommend the bibliography by Nash cited above highly enough. It is not just a bibliography. It is an annotated bibliography which makes a big difference. Here is Shirley Brice Heath and Amanda Branscombe's "'Intelligent Writing' in an Audience Community" which describes getting students from higher grades to write students in lower grades and then to an interested person, an idea that is one step up from journal writing. Two cooperating teachers can reach 60+ students with individualized instruction. One school here in San Francisco is doing it with kindergarteners and upper grade students which means it can be done for ESL adult students Here are Bell and Burnaby's A Handbook for ESL Literacy..."the single most concise 'how to' book for ESL literacy." Pat Rigg and Sidney Pratt, and Nina Wallerstein are here and Elsa Auerbach's insightful look at competency-based ESL. Two journals we've mentioned in this newsletter are cited, Passage: a Journal of Refugee Education (with the new CAL address) and RaPAL from England. At the end there are citations for other bibliographies and addresses where materials can be obtained. And on and on. Order it. If enough of us do, they might update it every year(?).(Editors)

RESEARCH

LEARNING DISABILITIES : In the last number we carried an article by Annette Clark on learning disabled people. At the February meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. Anneliese A. Pontius reported that very young children can be

identified as suffering from spatial dyslexiaby being asked to draw a picture. The New York Times article said,"The results are usually crude, but Dr. Pontius looks for drawing patterns that she describes as 'neolithic'. Of particular importance, she said, are the spatial proportions of the nose, eyebrows and forehead. A 'neolithic' representation of a face, she said, is one in which there is no separation of the nose from the forehead and which shows no suggestion of a nose bridge. Dr. Pontius said the test had evolved from an accidental discovery she had made in observations of aborigines of Stone Age cultures in New Guinea and Australia. The masks and other facial representations of these illiterate cultures are often similar to the 'neolithic' forms now used in her test. She found that about 20% of the faces carved in 17th- century New England tombstones are markedly of the 'neolithic' and presumably illiterate type. She said the style of faces was changed to a normal style when people who did not have spatial dyslexia became literate. She said that about 90% of the children who draw neolithic faces or who are unable to draw certain geometric dialgrams have reading difficulties. The underlying physical basis sometimes appears related to defects in the hippocampus, an organ within the brain." We have written to Dr. Pontius at Harvard Medical School, but our letter was returned with "not at this address" stamped on it. If any of you in the Boston area can locate her, perhaps you can find out where she has published her findings.

At his same conference, Dr. Martin F. Gardiner of the Harvard Medical School described another "new" test for dyslexia which is similar to what Annette suggested. "'Anyone can tap a finger on a table...but the spatial dyslectic is unable to tap a rhythmic pattern in response to verbal instruction, even though the instruction is perfectly well understood.' He said he had applied the test mainly to well-educated subjects who were often surprised by the results. Those who had had reading difficulties through much of their lives, including a doctoral candidte, could not correctly obey the tapping instructions. One implication is that the region of the brain needed for the special spatial abilities needed to identify patterns of letters within words was closely linked to musical abilities." All these handicaps can be overcome but it is important for educators to be able to identify the spatial dyslexics early in life to provide the special attention they may need.

One of my present students is a Filipina with overpowering reading problems. One of her other teachers reported to me the other day that in doing a jazz chant she was unable to clap rythmically. That is an important clue to me, but what do I do as a teacher to "provide the special attention" she may need? (Jack Wigfield)

REVIEW

HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING HMONG-SPEAKING STUDENTS by Bruce Thowpaou Bliatout, Bruce T. Downing, Judy Lewis and Dao Yang (available from Folsom Cordova Unified School District, Southeast Asia Community Resource Center, 125 East Bidwell Street, Folsom, CA 95630. $5.52 for Californians and $4.77 for others) is the 5th book in a series dealing with minority languages. I was told at a recent conference on minority languages that 12 books are planned. Books for Cantonese, Japanese, Pilipino, and Portuguese-speaking students are available from the Bureau of Publications Sales, California State Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95801-0271. The price is not given for these editions.

If you have Hmong students, this book is a must. If you want to see a book that combines scholarship and practical classroom guidance, this is worth looking at.

The book is divided into four chapters, followed by an extensive bibliography, and an appendix with further sources of information and a helpful glossary of terms used in the book. Chapter 1 gives a background of the Hmong people. Chapter 2 deals with education of the Hmong here, in refugee camps and in Laos itself. Chapter 3 is an analysis of the Hmong language with attention given to its differences with English. Chapter 4 gives recommended instructional and curricular strategies for Hmong.

It was suggested elsewhere in this newsletter in a review of Catherine Wallace's book that students speaking tonal languages can be taught to use their tones in speaking English. The authors of this handbook stress the differences and note that Hmong students will be confused by the differences they hear in English tone because they will want to assign a semantic/meaning to that difference. Once that hurdle has been overcome, I still feel that it would be a waste not to utilize Hmong semantic tone in teaching English intonational tone. From the analysis given in the book, Hmong does have the basic tonal contrasts of English. Hmong romanization uses final letters to indicate tone. <-b> for example is a high tone. If your Hmong students are familiar with Hmong romanization, use it. The English response to "What do you think of me?" can be shown using Hmong "tone" letters as "I likeb yous."(No tone mark indicates a mid level tone.) In response to "Who likes me?", "Ib likes yous." In response to "You like me." "Is likes youv? (Meaning, "Are you're kidding?)" In response to "Do you like him?" "Noj. I like youj." Hmmm. Maybe just for kidding around to show the importance of tone as it's used in English.

The authors use a clever technique of boxing in information pertinent to teachers. If the analysis gets a little heavy, concentrate on the pedagogical boxes. **(JACK WIGFIELD)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW NY ESL TEST In 1983, New York State developed an ESL curriculum for adults. A test was subsequently developed to assess the instructional objectives contained in that curriculum. The principal authors are Linda Smith Kharde and Jean Bodman. There is a "cursory English literacy screening" part of the test which should be of interest to us. The test is being field tested and revised now. We are on the mailing list of those being kept up to date on its progress. When we receive notice of the test's release, we'll pass that information on to you.

USC STUDENTS ORGANIZE **Peggy Lewis** has written us that several graduate students at the University of Southern California have formed a Literacy Roundtable which meets every two weeks. They are planning a Literacy Colloquium for May 21st. They are also interested in networking. You can call her at (213) 666-0948 or 743-2678.

MEETINGS The ADULT LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY SECOND ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE will meet at the Westin William Penn Hotel in Pittsburg July 27-31.

LAUBACH LITERACY ACTION BIENNIAL CONFERENCE will be held from June 22-26 at San Diego U.

If you attend either of these conferences, please write a short summary for the next newsletter. Did either meeting have a section on adult second language literacy?

NEWLETTERS Literacy Assistance Center, Inc. publishes a very informative newsletter,**INFORMATION UPDATE**, which is up to Vol.4: No.1, Nov. 1987. That issue looks at literacy in the workplace with articles by Sylvia Scribner, Thomas Sticht, and others. The Scribner piece told of a study of the literacy practices in a dairy. Contrary to first impressions it was a "literacy-saturated environment." No one ever failed in his job for literacy reasons, but some people were characterized by others as having low literacy skills. Written material was almost all non-textual with four fifths forms. The textual material was technical and called for advanced literacy skills. Most documents had numbers and 85% contained abbreviations. This means counting and arithmetic were involved in literacy events and reading abbreviations was a prerequisite for the accomplishment of many tasks. A comparison of white-collar and blue-collar jobs showed a mixed picture with some blue-collar jobs requiring more literacy use than white-collar jobs. Literacy definitely involved writing as well as reading. Scribner also reports self-generated literacy events taking place having nothing to do with performing a job. Making a reminder list for example. Not

all literacy events were work-related. People read newspapers and magazines, exchanged notes, worked crossword puzzles and made score sheets for card games.

The Sticht article challenged the notion that one must be literate before entering a training program. "Indeed, it has long been recognized by UNESCO that literacy can be acquired and developed while it is being used to learn technical knowledge." Sticht and his associates, under a Ford Foundation grant, developed a course of technical training in basic electricity and electronics that will accept females and minorities (our ESL students?) with only "marginal" entering "aptitudes" or "literacy" skills. Their survey of existing texts and programs found them wanting. The Sticht program, "the functional context method" is based on the idea that learning should be meaningful (functional) for the student. He then goes on to explain how they did it. If you are in job training, this short article is well worth your time.

For a curriculum that looks more deeply at employment than the current ABE and "survival skills" curricula, and also to be put on the mailing list for this FREE newsletter, write to: Literacy Assistance Center, 15 Dutch Street, New York, NY 10038.

FOCUS ON BASICS comes out three times a year and costs $10. Its subtitle is "Innovative teaching practices for adults." The next issue will deal with ESL adult literacy. The issue I'm looking at, Vol 1: No 1, 1987, has an article by Arlene Fingeret descibing her research project in which she spent 12 months in the homes and communities of 40 nonliterate American adults who had agreed to teach her about their lives. Maritza Arristia writes about the Mothers' Reading Program in New York City which uses the Paulo Freire's approach. Paul Jurmo encourages the involvement of learners actively in the design and implementation of instructional activities. The Blackboard on the back page lists suggested reading. To subscribe write: FOCUS ON BASICS, World Education, 210 Lincoln St., Boston, MA 02111

MAILING ADDRESS If you want to be on our mailing list, please send a 45 cent stamped self-addressed business-sized envelope to SUSAN LAWSON, Alemany CCC, San Francisco, CA 94109.

This newsletter was printed through the help of Warren Smith, associate director of Alemany Community College Center, San Francisco Community College District, San Francisco. It was edited by Carole Glanzer, Susan Lawson, and Jack Wigfield.

ADDENDUM

In an earlier newsletter we talked about the importance of field trips, and Tim Walsh has written about photos and field trips as well. This is a picture of Tim Doyle practice teaching with Jack Wigfield's class on their way down Van Ness Ave. in San Francisco, filling in whited-out parts of photos on their Tim Walsh type lesson sheets.

"Oh, that is Bus Stop," says Shereen.

These are samples of Tim Walsh's lesson page which he explained in "What's in a Name?"

(APPENDIX A)

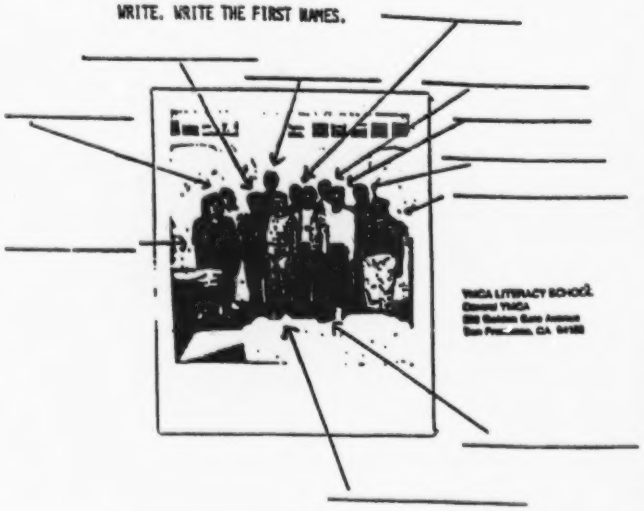
1. NAME: (FIRST)

1. WHAT'S YOUR FIRST NAME?
SHOW ME.

2. NAME: (FIRST)

NAME: (FIRST) (APPENDIX B)

LOOK.
WRITE. WRITE THE FIRST NAMES.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

I asked one of my "problem" students to draw a picture of me to see how it matched Dr. Anneliese A. Pontius' theory of "neolithic" drawings as symptoms of spacial dyslexia. What do you think? Those vertical lines on the cheeks represent my mustache. My student is a 35ish Tagalog. She had no formal education in Manila, but her English is fluent Filipino English.

12.

LATE ADDENDUM

Fraida Dubin's review was sent a week before our deadline, but for some reason never reached us. We went to press and then found out she had sent it. Here is Dr. Dubin's review:

A reminder. If you want a November Newsletter, please don't forget to send us a 45 cent stamped self-addressed business- sized envelope. Funds from workshops are getting scarcer. Our address:

Susan Lawson- ESL Adult Literacy
Alemany Community College Center
750 Eddy Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

REVIEW

FIRST STEPS IN READING AND WRITING: a Literacy Skills Workbook, second edition, and **TEACHER'S MANUAL**, Jack Wigfield, New York: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1988.

The decision to call Jack Wigfield's newly published First Steps in Reading and Writing a "new, revised edition" may reflect the publisher's intent to expand the lifespan of a successful title. What potential users of the book should realize, however, is that the word "new" is more than a publisher's blurb. In the years between 1982 when the first edition came out and now, six years later, the author's approach to ESL literacy has deepened and expanded. His pedagogical methods have moved from more mechanical to a focus which emphasizes meaning. Thus, this so-called second edition is a new book, one which reflects a rare synthesis of theory and practice, not only among ESL textbooks in general, but even more so in the specialized area of basic literacy for adults from non-English language backgrounds.

What is most apparent in comparing the earlier 1982 work with the recent one is the strength of the Teacher's Manual. It serves to connect literate, native-speaker teachers/tutors with "zero-level" learners by recognizing the gulf that lies between their worlds. Since it contains such a rich source of information for native speakers of English, it is essential that the two volumes be used together.

The introduction tells us that First Steps in Reading and Writing is designed for adult learners at zero-level who are non-literate in their L1 as well as for non-Roman alphabet users, although it is unclear how much knowledge of English students need in order to use the book comfortably. The introduciton also promises that the present volume, A Literacy Skills Workbook, is one of two that constitute the "second edition", although it is not clearly stated who the audience will be for the second, or forthcoming book. Presumably, it will be for students who are beyond "zero-level". As one gets into the lessons of the present book, however, it appears that students must possess at least a basic knowledge of English in order to carry out the tasks.

Underlying the carefully set out lessons is the author's acknowledged debt to the language experience approach. Here, however, the method is extended through the technique of having students expand the drawings in their workbook with elements pertaining to their own lives and concerns. Of course, the technique assumes that adults will enter into this activity without inhibitions.

Each of the 40 lessons contains seven sections: (1) Preclass Activities: usually a task for motivational purposes (the dialogues of the first edition have been dropped); (2) Form: filling in the kind of information commonly required of adults. For example, in lesson one students write their names (block letters) so they must already be able to form letter shapes to some extent; (3) Make a picture: the add-on drawing activity; (4) Sound /Symbol Correspondence: quick drills; (5) Listen/ Write, dictation exercises; (6) Separate: practice in recognizing word designations in English; (7) Copy: working on letter